

Broadband Internet connectivity is not an “information service”.

I can access information by calling someone on the telephone, but the telephone system is not an information service.

I can access information by driving my car to the library, but the highway system is not an information service.

Similarly, I can access information by going to Google or some other web site, but Google is not “the Internet,” and the wires, cables, switches, routers and other infrastructure that I use to access web sites or other “information services” do not provide any information.

A network of networks by itself is not an information service.

A Broadband connection to the Internet is a public communications utility that is just as essential in 2017 (if not more so) than telephone service was in 1936 when Title II was passed.

As an engineer and Information Technology professional living and working in a rural area, I can say from experience that the ‘digital divide’ is very real. I have customers who can not get anything close to broadband connectivity. The “free market’ has not served to bring high speed connectivity to rural areas.

We need a 2017 equivalent of the Rural Electrification Act to bring essential true broadband connectivity to the rest of the US, and we need reasonable regulation to ensure that the virtual monopoly that a single ISP has in a rural area does not result in prices that are far out of line with more developed areas. People living outside of urban areas should not be treated as second class citizens by being denied access to the educational and economic benefits of a broadband connection to the Internet.